3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of interpreting, at the media gateway controller, the signaling content.

4. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of issuing gateway control commands, from the media gateway controller to the media endpoint, based on the signaling content.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the media gateway controller similarly controls multiple media endpoints and similarly communicates with multiple signaling gateways.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the routing step routes some of the packet-switched bearer streams to one of the multiple media endpoints, and some others of the packet-switched bearer streams to another of the multiple media endpoints.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the media endpoint is a media proxy.

8. The method of claim 7, further comprising the step of forwarding one of the packet-switched bearer streams from the media proxy to a media gateway also controlled by the media gateway controller.

9. The method of claim 8, further comprising, prior to the forwarding step, modifying the format of the forwarded packet-switched bearer stream within the media proxy.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the media endpoint is a media gateway.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the signaling gateway and the media endpoint co-reside on the same platform.

12. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

multiplexing, at the media gateway controller, outbound signaling content destined for the packet-switched call signaling connections terminated by the signaling gateway, onto a smaller plurality of sessions with the signaling gateway;

parsing, at the signaling gateway, the outbound signaling content into protocol data units identifiable with their associated call-signaling connections; and

transmitting each protocol data unit over its associated call-signaling connection, using the native transport protocol appropriate to that signaling connection.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the transport protocol utilized for the call-signaling connections comprises TCP.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein the transport protocol utilized for the call-signaling connections comprises UDP.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the transport protocol utilized for the call-signaling connections comprises TCP.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the transport protocol utilized for the call-signaling connections comprises UDP.

17. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

periodically saving call state information for the calls served by the primary media gateway controller to a failover media gateway controller; and

upon the occurrence of a failure at the media gateway controller, failing over to the failover media gateway controller both control of the media endpoint and communication with the signaling gateway.

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18. (once amended) The method of claim 1, wherein one of the packet-switched bearer streams is an audio stream.

19. The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of routing a packet-switched video stream associated with the audio stream to the media endpoint controlled by the media gateway controller.

20. A packet-switched signaling gateway comprising:

means for terminating a plurality of packet-switched call signaling connections; and

means for multiplexing the signaling content received over the plurality of packet-switched call signaling connections onto a smaller number of packet-switched sessions for transmission to a media gateway controller.

21. The packet-switched signaling gateway of claim 20,wherein the packet-switched call signaling connections include H.225 Q.931 connections, H.225 RAS connections, and H.245 connections.

22. The signaling gateway of claim 20, wherein the smaller number is one.

23. The signaling gateway of claim 20, wherein the transport protocol used by the terminating means for the plurality of packet-switched call signaling connections comprises TCP.

24. The signaling gateway of claim 23, wherein the transport protocol used by the multiplexing means for the single session is selected from the group of protocols consisting of TCP, SCTP, and RUDP.

25. The signaling gateway of claim 20, wherein the transport protocol used by the terminating means for each of the plurality of packet-switched call signaling connections is selected from the group of protocols consisting of TCP, SCTP, and RUDP.

26. The signaling gateway of claim 20, wherein the transport protocol used by the multiplexing means for the single session is selected from the group of protocols consisting of TCP and RUDP.

27. The signaling gateway of claim 20, further comprising:

means for receiving multiplexed signaling content from a media gateway controller; and

means for parsing the multiplexed signaling content into multiple protocol data units and transmitting each protocol data unit over its appropriate packet-switched call signaling connection.

28. The signaling gateway of claim 20, further comprising:

means for terminating a packet-switched bearer stream associated with one of the packet-switched call signaling connections.

29. The signaling gateway of claim 28, further comprising:

means for receiving gateway control signaling from a media gateway controller; and

control means responsive to received gateway control signaling.

30. A media gateway controller comprising:

means for receiving multiplexed signaling content from a signaling gateway and parsing this content into signaling content associated with identifiable packet-switched call signaling connections; and

means for sending, for signaling content associated with one of the identifiable call signaling connections, gateway control signaling responsive to that signaling content, to a media termination endpoint handling a packet-switched bearer stream associated with that identifiable call-signaling connection.

31. The media gateway controller of claim 30, further comprising:

multiplexing means for assembling outbound signaling content—destined for the packet-switched call signaling connections terminated by the signaling gateway—onto a number of sessions smaller than the number of terminated call signaling connections for transmission to the signaling gateway.

32. A packet-switched communication system comprising:

a plurality of signaling gateways, each signaling gateway capable of terminating a plurality of packet-switched call signaling connections—each connection corresponding to one of a plurality of packet-switched calls—and multiplexing the signaling content of the call signaling connections onto a number of sessions smaller than the number of terminated call signaling connections;

a plurality of media endpoints, each endpoint capable of terminating a plurality of packet-switched bearer streams;

a set of one or more primary media gateway controllers, the set of primary media gateway controllers in communication with each of the signaling gateways and each of the media endpoints, the media gateway controllers using multiplexed signaling content received from the plurality of signaling gateways to control operation of the media endpoints.

33. The packet-switched communication system of claim 32, further comprising a failover media gateway controller that periodically receives call state information from one of

the primary media gateway controllers, and takes over communication with a signaling gateway or media endpoint upon failure of that primary media gateway controller with respect to that gateway or endpoint.

34. The packet-switched communication system of claim 32, further comprising a set of one or more failover media gateway controllers that periodically receive call state information from the set of primary media gateway controllers, and takes over communication with a signaling gateway or media endpoint upon failure of one of the primary media gateway controllers with respect to that gateway or endpoint.

35. The packet-switched communication system of claim 32, wherein at least one of the signaling gateways co-resides with one of the media endpoints on a common platform.

36. The packet-switched communication system of claim 32, wherein the packet-switched call signaling connections terminated by at least one of the signaling gateways comprise at least one TCP connection.

37. The packet-switched communication system of claim 32, wherein the plurality of media endpoints comprises both media gateways and media proxies.